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Folk Culture as a National Idea of the Tyva Republic

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The article examines topical issues of folk culture of the Republic of Tuva. The author explores the genesis of folk culture of Tuva and comes to the conclusion that the crucial significance belongs to the development of the creative personality – a medium of folk culture. The article raises the question of the need to strengthen educational work on the formation of a creative personality.

Keywords: Tyva Republic, folk culture, creative personality.

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Analysis of the traditional culture of the various peoples, and people of Tuva in particular, has shown that, unfortunately, the natural process of disappearing of some types of artistic crafts (in particular, the production of saddles, bridles, chests, sewing of traditional clothing and shoes) is inevitable, and is determined by the modernization of society and changes in household life. The first thing to vanish is elements, which are closely related to everyday life. More importantly – spiritual values of people also become part of history.

No culture can (and could before) develop on its own. The process of interaction with other cultures permanently goes along with the existence of any culture since its inception.

The beginning 20s of XX century ceased the process of centuries-old communication and cultural interaction between Tuva and Mongolia, China, and indirectly, through them, with other Asian countries, as previously neighboring Turkic peoples of Siberia. Meanwhile, ties of the Tuvans with eastern neighbors were extremely strong and long. Art historians and culture experts of Tuva note that the influence was reflected in all kinds of Tuvan folk art: in music, folklore, arts and crafts, sculpture, and in general in the mentality of the Tuvan people. However, this problem has never been a subject for deep scientific research.

In Soviet times, the orientation of scientific research was directed exclusively to the study of the influence of Russian Soviet culture on the

Tuvan culture, but even in this field the approach was quite formal, declarative and political. How has the Tuvan culture changed, what positive and negative elements have emerged in there – is also an under-researched problem.

Nowadays more topicality is gained by the study of spiritual culture of the traditional society, the study of its components, its potentials associated with mentality, an attitude to nature and people. Vitality of the spiritual culture can be explained by its self-sufficiency, its synergy. Performing annual rituals with reference to the objects of nature, people achieved psychological satisfaction, and learned to live in harmony with the world and in harmony with themselves.

Spiritual culture of the traditional society teaches the ability to achieve psychological comfort in life, to enjoy simple human emotions – love for women, children, friendship, and to live in harmony with nature and with ourselves. It is not necessary to replace these universal values with material excess.

Our recent period of the last decades has shown that blind adherence to the experience of the developed (western) civilizations is not always positive. Tuva has already gained similar experience. It is well known that in terms of economy the production impact of Western technology has accelerated the development of the oriental societies, but in the spiritual field problems of the current crisis have only become deeper, have turned into a real humanitarian catastrophe. It is up for them to decide, no one can help here.

Unfortunately, government officials, the authorities and not only in Tuva ignore appeals of scientists – anthropologists, philosophers, literary critics, art historians. This potential of the republic is almost not used at all. Cultural policies are formed by formal cultural officials, not scientists, without consultation with experts. There is no strategy for the cultural policy; there

is no monitoring for the cultural development of rural and urban populations. Holiday concerts and awards at various festivals – are, according to officials, the most important indicators of cultural development of the republic.

Modern Tuvan society ought to realize the importance of social and psychological problems, ought to develop integrated programs for overcoming the deep spiritual crisis, which, by the way, will certainly produce an impact on the economy of the republic. Tuva is among the most depressed regions of Russia, not only in economy and production, but also in the social sphere, health care. The republic has one of the lowest levels of life expectancy and one of the highest proportion of the population living below the poverty line. According to the census 2002 in Tuva “the average life expectancy of both sexes was 55 years (men – 49.4, women – 61.9) in rural areas – 53.7 years (men – 48.4, for women – 60.4” (Analytical note... 2002).

There are two forces that can help our society to find a path out of the deep crisis: the government in cooperation with science (and humanities), and spiritual values of the folk culture, only these forces can provide a powerful impetus for the development. This way has been used by the countries of South-East Asia, where the state united its society, and its culture provided important moral and psychological support for people to survive in difficult economic conditions. We hear lots of talk about the national idea, and yet experience of the modernized oriental countries has proved that this role is to be played by the national culture itself.

We cannot isolate the national culture, but we ought to preserve its basic values. Religion as an important part of any culture is one of them. The institution of Tuvan family is being destroyed, diminishing the importance of the father as head of the family. Customs and rules of national etiquette, the proper attitude to older people and

children, and traditions of education are forgotten or stored formally, without understanding. Wedding and funeral rituals are being modified, excluding national ethical standards.

Culture – is not just a song, dance, and even the ancient throat singing, but ethnic and spiritual values. Keeping the old traditions in an old way makes no sense, the world is changing and the people working on the computer cannot see it the way their ancestors did a hundred or more years ago, but both of them: the ancestors and living people are people of one nation, representatives of one people. It is spiritual values that are supposed to unite them. Otherwise, the culture is becoming a genetically modified food product, a mutant. Soon this process may become irreversible. Scientists – social experts always say that the culture is in danger in Russia in general, and in the national republics in particular.

Special attention, at the state level, now ought to be paid to education of the **creative personality**. This requires certain education reforms. No doubt, it is a departure from the

traditional, in particular, the Tuvan education, requiring obedience and prohibiting standing out, however, we ought to understand that this is an asset, which was developed by the western society, and this asset is to be implemented today by representatives of other Asian cultures. At the same time the creative personality does not exclude the person's awareness of his (her) moral responsibility to the community, people, the country, a person of high intellect and culture.

Seeking solutions to purely economic problems is impossible without solving the problems of spiritual development of the modern Tuvan society. The Eastern civilization understood that in the XIX century (e.g. in Japan for over a hundred years in schools conducted lessons of morality), the Western civilization is about just now to discuss this, whereas it is high time we thoughtfully tackled the problem. New cultural programs ought to be developed in the Republic of Tyva – these are effective and actually working cultural programs, taking into account cultural features of the mentality and national character.

References

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Народная культура как национальная идея Республики Тыва

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В статье рассматриваются актуальные вопросы развития народной культуры Республики Тывы. Автор исследует генезис народной культуры Тывы и приходит к выводу о том, что решающее значение имеет развитие творческой личности носителя народной культуры. В статье поднимается вопрос о необходимости усиления воспитательной работы по формированию творческой личности.

Ключевые слова: Республика Тыва, народная культура, творческая личность.

Работа выполнена в рамках исследований, финансируемых Красноярским краевым фондом поддержки научной и научно-технической деятельности, а также в рамках тематического плана СФУ по заданию Министерства образования и науки Российской Федерации.
